



Gottman-Style Couples Check-In Questions

A simple weekly check-in to strengthen connection, understanding, and emotional safety.

Emotional Connection

Goal: Reconnect and understand each other's inner world.

Ask each other:

- What was the highlight of your week?
- What felt stressful or heavy for you this week?
- When did you feel most connected to me recently?
- Is there something you've been wanting to share ?

Tip: Listen to understand, not to fix. Offer Empathy before advice.



Conflict & Repair

Goal: Reflect on challenges and strengthen trust through repair.

Ask each other:

- Was there a moment this week that felt tense, hurtful, or misunderstood?
- What was underneath that moment for you?
- How can I respond differently next time?
- Is there anything you need acknowledged or repaired?

Repair phrases you can use: "I see your point." "I care about how this landed." "Can we try again?"



Intimacy & Affection

Goal: Support closeness, warmth, and emotional safety.

Ask each other:

- How do you like to receive affection right now?
- What small gesture would help you feel more loved this week?
- How can we create more moments of warmth or playfulness?

Reminder: Affection isn't always sexual — it's about safety, presence, and care.

Appreciation & Fondness

Goal: Strengthen friendship and positive sentiment.

Ask each other:

- What is one thing I did this week that made you feel appreciated?
- What is something about me you're grateful for today?
- When do you feel most valued or seen by me?
- What's a small win we had as a couple recently?

Reminder: Gratitude softens criticism and builds safety.



Future & Dreams

Goal: Build shared meaning and a sense of "us."

Ask each other:

- What are you looking forward to in the near future?
- What's something meaningful you'd like us to work toward together?
- How can I support your growth now?
- What would help us feel more aligned as a team?

Tip: Focus on "we" goals more than "me" goals.



Finances & Money

Goal: Create safety and collaboration around money.

Ask each other:

- How are you feeling about money right now (stress, calm, uncertainty, confidence)?
- What helps you feel safer or more supported around finances?
- One small financial win or step we can acknowledge:

Reminder: When money feels tense, it's often about safety, not numbers.



Gottman Stress-Reducing Conversation Skill

A Simple Path to Calm, Connection, and Understanding

Stress is unavoidable but conflict doesn't have to be.

This conversation is not about fixing problems. It's about listening, understanding, and creating emotional safety so daily stress doesn't turn into disconnection.

Step 1: Open the Door

Begin with a gentle invitation:

“Do you want to talk about what’s been stressing you today?”

“Is there anything on your mind?”

The goal is to invite, not interrogate.

Step 2: Attuned Listener

Your role is to listen — not fix.

Lean in

Make eye contact

Avoid interrupting or problem-solving

The goal is undoing aloneness through attunement

Step 3: Empathy & Care

Empathetic phrases sound like:

“That sounds really overwhelming.”

“I can see why that was frustrating.”

“That makes sense.”

The goal is understanding and warmth

Step 4: Ask Questions

Show interest with supportive questions:

“What was the hardest part for you?”

“What do you need right now — listening or ideas?”

Curiosity invites closeness

Step 5: Share & Switch

Once your partner feels lighter, switch roles.

You share your stress

They listen using the same steps

Both partners deserve space and support.

Step 6: End with Comfort

Close with warmth and reassurance.

A hug or gentle touch

“Thanks for listening.”

We're a team. Stress doesn't win

Remember

Listen. Empathize. Ask. Share. Comfort.

- ✓ Builds emotional intimacy
- ✓ Prevents stress from becoming conflict
- ✓ Strengthens a sense of “us”
- ✓ Turns stress into connection

Move beyond “How was your day?”

Gottman recommends a 5:1 ratio for stress-reducing conversations. These conversations turn daily stress into deeper understanding, emotional safety, and intimacy.



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Relationship Repair Map

Rebuilding Trust After Conflict

Conflict happens in every relationship. What matters most is how couples repair after tension. Repair isn't about winning or being right — it's about restoring emotional safety, trust, and connection..

Each Partner Takes Turns Doing One Side Of The Repair Map

Step 1: Name the Moment

Briefly identify what happened.

- What was the moment of tension, hurt, or disconnection?
- Use feelings words, don't accuse - simply state how it felt.

Reminder: I can be mad but not shame my partner.

Step 3: Under The Moment

Go beneath the reaction.

- What I was feeling underneath (e.g., hurt, fear, overwhelm):
- What I needed or longed for in that moment:

Tip: Go underneath the reaction, not deeper into the argument.

Step 5: What Would Help?

Repair works best when it meets a need. What do you need to begin the healing process?

- What would help you feel more understood?
- Is there something you need acknowledged or changed moving forward?

Reminder: My need should restore connection, not deliver consequences.

Step 2: Own Your Part

Focus on your impact — not your intention.

- One thing I may have done or said that contributed:
- How I imagine this may have landed for my partner:

Reminder: Repair starts with owning your impact, not your intent.

Step 4: Offer Repair

Choose words that communicate care and responsibility. Repair phrases you can use:

- “I see how that hurt you.”
- “That wasn't my intention, but I understand the impact.”

Tip: Speak to restore safety, not to be right.

Step 6: Recommit as a Team

End with reassurance and connection.

- One thing I appreciate about you:
- One small step we can take to reconnect:

Reminder: Repair is about restoring “us,” not revisiting the fight.